

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

FOR ROCK/SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN COUNTIES

SEPTEMBER 2001



Rates Fall

August Labor Scene

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the **Janesville/Beloit Metropolitan Area** fell to 4.8 percent in August, down 3.7 percent from the revised July figure of 8.5 percent.

The size of the decline in the Janesville/Beloit Metro rate represents a return to normalcy in Janesville/Beloit unemployment rates, and is actually 0.3 percentage points below the 5.1 percent rate recorded last August. Rates were high in July largely due to the annual General Motors shutdown that occurs each July. For two weeks in July General Motors closes the Janesville plant to clean and to change over to the new model year. This creates a ripple effect for other Rock County employers. Employers that produce products for use in the manufacturing process at General Motors often lay-off workers in July because General Motors does not need goods and materials during the annual shutdown.

The unadjusted unemployment rate for the six county Southwestern Wisconsin area also fell, down 2.3 percent as compared to July. Three of six Southwest counties reported declines in their labor force and four of six reported declines in the number of persons unemployed. What happens in August, the height of summer, that causes the size of the labor force to decline? Generally, students begin to prepare to return to school, especially college students. Jobs with recreation departments, camps, and summer education end in August. And, finally, families take summer vacations and teenagers quit jobs to join them. Because these summer jobholders leave the labor market when they leave jobs, there is no increase in the number of unemployed in the local labor force. In fact, unemployment declined in all six Southwestern Wisconsin Counties and at the state level in August as jobseekers moved in to fill some of the jobs vacated by students.

Despite an economy that is slowing in some sectors, five of six Southwest Wisconsin Counties have higher total nonfarm job counts when compared to August

2000. The total number of jobs in the Southwest Region is up by more than 1,500 compared to last August. Most of these increases were reported in the trade and service industry sectors.

Statewide

The state's seasonal unemployment rate declined in August by 0.1 of a percentage point. The rate was up a full percent as compared to last August. Wisconsin's nonfarm wage and salary jobs dropped to 2,850,800 from 2,853,900 in July. The number of jobs was also down from one year ago, when the total number of jobs was reported at 2,857,300. Statewide manufacturing totals were down 29,300 from last August.

National Bits

The national seasonal unemployment rate increased to 4.9 in August, up 0.4 percentage points from July's 4.5 percent. The 4.9 percent reading in August was up by 0.8 percentage points from last August's 4.1 percent.

The national Retail Sales (MARTS) Index posted an upwardly revised 0.4 percentage point gain in August. However, sharp declines were reported in September, as retail sales sank by 2.4 percent in

September. That's the largest single-month drop in the nine years that the MARTS Index has existed. In September, declines were most pronounced in apparel and auto sales. Some analysts feel sales are likely to bounce back slightly in October as the slow rebound of consumer spending in the weeks following September 11 returns retail sales to their pre-attack level. However, many of these same analysts are predicting that the rebound in October will not be as strong as the decline in September.

A Thought

As Wisconsin Governor Scott McCallum said on September 11th, "Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims and their families."

Labor Force Estimates (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	Janesville-Beloit MSA	Wisconsin (000s)	United States (000s)
Current month: August 2001			
Civilian Labor Force	82,100	3,046.7	141,350
Employment	78,100	2,917.0	134,393
Unemployment	4,000	129.7	6,957
Unemployment rate	4.8%	4.3%	4.9%
Change from July 2001			
Civilian Labor Force	(3,300)	-9.5	-424
Employment	(100)	-5.3	-986
Unemployment	(3,300)	-4.2	562
Unemployment rate	-3.7%	-0.1%	0.4%
Change from August 2000			
Civilian Labor Force	3,300	99.9	626
Employment	3,300	78.3	-546
Unemployment	-	21.6	1,172
Unemployment rate	-0.3%	1.0%	0.8%

Note: All estimates are preliminary and based on place of residence.

Labor Force and Employment Estimates for Rock / Southwestern Wisconsin (not seasonally adjusted)

August 2001

	Grant	Green	Iowa	Lafayette	Richland	Rock	Region	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force*	24,500	19,600	14,500	7,800	8,900	82,100	157,500	3,079,134
Annual Percent Change	4.3%	4.7%	7.4%	10.6%	6.7%	3.4%	4.6%	3.3%
Employed	23,500	19,000	14,200	7,600	8,600	78,100	150,900	2,957,882
Unemployed	1,000	600	400	300	300	4,000	6,500	121,252
Unemployment rate(%)	4.1%	3.1%	2.6%	3.5%	3.2%	4.8%	4.1%	3.9%

Non-Farm Place of Work Employment Data

Total, all industries**	18,060	15,700	11,330	3,630	6,040	72,440	127,190	2,850,800
Annual Growth Rate:	-1.48%	0.97%	2.72%	3.30%	1.40%	1.59%	1.21%	-0.23%
Construction & Mining	940	560	640	140	250	3,360	5,900	140,300
Manufacturing	2,840	3,520	760	580	1,730	19,440	28,860	596,000
Durable	1,800	2,350	660	340	1,340	14,430	20,930	355,200
Nondurable	1,040	1,160	100	240	390	5,000	7,930	240,800
Trans & Public Utilities	560	410	350	200	170	3,170	4,870	134,400
Wholesale Trade	900	650	390	310	200	3,640	6,080	139,800
Retail Trade	3,650	4,200	5,700	590	1,360	14,150	29,650	506,800
FIRE	780	400	160	230	210	2,040	3,810	153,800
Services	4,040	4,230	1,940	460	1,020	18,420	30,120	799,600
Government	4,350	1,740	1,390	1,110	1,120	8,210	17,920	380,100

Change from July 2001

Civilian Labor Force*	-300	-200	100	0	0	-3,300	-3,600	-48,376
Employed	-100	0	300	200	0	-100	200	-31,627
Unemployed	-200	-200	0	-100	0	-3,300	-3,900	-16,749
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.6%	-0.9%	-0.3%	-1.2%	-0.6%	-3.7%	-2.3%	-0.5%
Total, all industries**	50	100	310	90	90	820	1,430	-3,100
Construction & Mining	0	-10	0	0	0	-60	-70	-610
Manufacturing	10	110	0	0	80	1,120	1,310	-1,700
Durable	0	110	0	-10	80	1,010	1,210	-1,400
Nondurable	10	-10	0	10	0	100	110	-300
Trans & Public Utilities	0	-20	0	0	20	-20	-10	600
Wholesale Trade	-80	0	0	0	0	70	-20	400
Retail Trade	50	120	300	10	-10	-80	400	2,600
FIRE	10	0	0	10	0	20	30	-300
Services	40	80	10	50	10	20	210	400
Government	30	-170	0	0	0	-270	-400	-4,500

Change from August 2000

Civilian Labor Force*	1,000	900	1,000	700	600	2,700	6,900	97,623
Employed	800	1,000	1,000	800	500	2,600	6,500	76,069
Unemployed	200	0	100	0	0	100	300	21,554
Unemployment rate(%)	0.6%	-0.4%	0.3%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.6%
Total, all industries**	-270	150	300	120	80	1,140	1,510	-6,500
Construction & Mining	30	0	20	0	20	-50	30	-900
Manufacturing	-590	-190	-30	-30	-100	90	-870	-29,200
Durable	-620	-60	-20	-60	-80	260	-570	-22,500
Nondurable	30	-130	-10	20	-20	-190	-300	-6,800
Trans & Public Utilities	-30	-20	0	-10	10	0	-30	1,600
Wholesale Trade	-60	-50	20	20	0	100	20	-1,600
Retail Trade	140	240	60	0	10	410	860	2,100
FIRE	40	-10	0	10	10	50	90	3,700
Services	80	170	200	40	60	940	1,510	15,300
Government	130	10	30	80	90	-410	-80	2,600

* Includes participants residing in area. ** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted.
Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

Direct questions and comments to: **William Brockmiller, Labor Market Analyst**

La Crosse Job Center, 402 North 8th Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

608-785-9337 E-mail: brockwi@dwd.state.wi.us